

SCARS

THE MAGAZINE THAT LEAVES MARKS
VOLUME 2 ISSUE 3

The Good Sisters

100 TEARS' MARCUS KOCH **RUN BITCH RUN**

WALKING DISTANCE'S MEL HOUSE THE DOWDLE BROTHERS

SPAGHETTI WESTERNS **MALICE AFTERDARK!**

DISMAL'S GARY KING & LYDIA CHANDLER

A close-up shot of a chef's hand in a white uniform, holding a silver platter. On the platter are three books stacked, with a large, bloody piece of meat resting on top. Another piece of meat is on the platter in front of the books. The background is dark, and the chef's uniform has black buttons and a black necktie.

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SCARS

Black Film & Video

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Cover: The Good Sisters
Image Provided by Jimmy O Burril

FRONTAL LOBE EDITORIAL



This is the editorial section--the spot where I get to go off on stuff, talk about plans for the magazine, or explain things that you, the reader, may be confused about that might be going on with **SCARS**.

I'm happy to let you know that the subscriptions are in full swing again, which means very shortly **SCARS** will be available in select shops around the world. We here at SCARS have taken it upon ourselves to not rely on outside forces to do what needs to get done.

We not only gather all magazine content ourselves; we print, assemble, fold, staple and bag every subscription issue by hand. For single issues we are still using magcloud to get **SCARS** to non subscribers.

We are very happy with the way this is working and feel good about being in control of our own publishing and distribution.

I'm sure the question will frequently arise about us being in the major book chains. Our answer to this is; only if they start accepting self distributed titles. Right now they only use one distributor and they are not economically streamlined. The waste and HUGE production costs involved in being in these chains far outweighs the income that comes from being distributed.

This decision also reinforces what **SCARS** stands for. Supporting the little guy. We encourage you to go to your local Mom and Pop book or comic shop and ask for **SCARS**. Without the "Little Guy" we have no real economy and the **American Dream Dies**. So please ask for us in these places and the world will be a better place!

Ray D
The Wizard Of **SCARS**



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NO CLOWNING AROUND

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARCUS KOCH

Interview By Will Sanders

Coulrophobia: an abnormal or exaggerated fear of clowns. Many people already suffer from this condition and indie- horror director Marcus Koch has just made their phobia ten times worse. His slaughter-fest 100 TEARS has blazed through the horror film festival circuit, been distributed in Europe and now, finally, in the U.S.

Koch started tearing up the world of indie horror both by his directing capabilities and his intensely bloody SFX work from his company Oddtopsy FX, that has worked on indie horror films such as ROT, CLOSET SPACE, an upcoming film with Reggie Bannister called WALKING DISTANCE, and of course 100 TEARS. Marcus Koch isn't clowning around by any means and many (myself included) believe he is one of the next Who's Who in Horror.

SCARS: What got you into film-making and FX industry?

MARCUS KOCH: Since I was a child, anything horror themed seemed to be my peak interests, be it haunted attractions or just about any R rated horror VHS I could get my hands on. I just knew it was what I wanted to do with my life. That one way or another I'd be in the realm of horror films. Also being an artist, all my artwork seemed to follow that common horror theme.

I just liked all the grim bloody imagery, the shock of it all. And still do very much, but now more so, what goes into it that makes it scary or horrific – the workings of horror. It's like a good magic trick that makes you ask, "How did that happen?"

SCARS: I read on your IMDB page that you worked on TOXIC AVENGER IV, what was it like working with Lloyd Kaufman?

MK: This is a sort of long story. Lloyd is great; worked with him several times since. But when I say "worked on" TOXIE 4, it's more like I made shit at home in Tampa (charred 'tards to be exact) and shipped them up to the production. I didn't get to be on set or any of that fun stuff, but



I was 18 or 19 at the time and it was truly my first foray into how the film industry really works. Troma's line producer for TA4, Pat Cassidy, contacted me after seeing my FX work in ROT and asked if I'd like to make some props for Toxie. I said hell yeah, he said they would send me a check to get started and buy materials.

The check never came. A few weeks down to the wire, I got a call saying, "We are

having trouble with funding. Can you cover the cost of materials, and we'll reimburse you?" Like a fool I said yes, and got the materials to make a bunch of charred foam chunks that would rain down when a school for the retarded gets blown up.

I sent the box, and kept emailing and calling to make sure the box arrived. UPS said it was delivered and signed for. So someone at Troma got the large box. Now it was down to, "When am I going to see that check?" No returned emails. No returned phone calls. That was the last I heard about it. Last year I finally watched TOXIE 4. What a silly movie. Who knows if the props ever got used. The scene happens so fast and there's unidentifiable shit laying around. So it was what it was. A learning experience.

I asked Lloyd about Pat a few years later, and his answer was, "Oh yeah I remember him. We fired him." Then he gave me a DVD of MOTHER'S DAY. Lloyd jokes about it now by saying, "We are Troma. That's how we do things."

SCARS: Tell us about 100 TEARS.

MK: It came about because I always wanted to make a clown film. I own just



from UNDEAD, that crazy Australian Sci-fi zombie flick. We were in talks with him and he was excited, but then we couldn't keep up with the demands his agent was making – rights to T-shirts and toys, the list just kept getting longer. He even told us, "Mungo is an international horror superstar," and who were we to offer him so little? Well, last I checked, I knew who Mungo was and Joe knew who he was, but point to any other guy? He's never even heard of him before. He'd only been in that one horror film.

Joe and I had worked with Jack Amos over the last six years off and on, on short films and a few other features I did FX for. He's always been a great guy, so we asked him. Honestly, he almost passed on Gurdy because he doesn't watch horror films and didn't want to be in them. But he knew Joe and I were very serious and trusted us, and figured it might be a lot of fun. Now after the film is finished and he's seen the response at film festivals and horror cons, I think Jack's eyes have been opened to a whole new world he never knew existed.

So all in all, I think things happen for a reason and no one could have nailed a more sinister clown than Jack. He really shines as Gurdy.

SCARS: Where did the idea of an almost comically gigantic meat cleaver come from?

MK: Believe it or not, it's not that unreal of a meat cleaver. They really do exist. Chinese butchers use similarly large cleavers in cooking. No joke, I saw one on some cooking show, and thought "Gee, wouldn't that be scary if some crazed clown was swinging that fucking thing at you?" It would just dissemble you in a flash.

SCARS: 100 Tears was primarily shot in Gibsonton, FL, an off season winter town for carnivals and retired carnies. Do you think that added to the creepiness of 100 TEARS and was that any inspiration for the original script?

MK: Gibsonton is an incredible place. It's a lost piece of history, and such an unusual location. It falls into the same reason I've wanted to make a clown film; it's just a great strange area to be in and since it's

only a short drive from Tampa, everything fell into place. There was actually another classic diner that closed down, that we wanted to shoot in (called Giants Camp) but it's long gone. We lucked out with the Showtown. All the walls are hand painted with the crazy stuff of carnie past. Even the bizarre artwork creeps its way into the bathroom. By the toilets are painted people staring at you while you do your business. It's just wrong and I love it.

SCARS: I really thought that Joe Davidson and Georgia Chris had great chemistry as the two lead journalists covering the Tear Drop Killer story. Did that take much direction or was it natural?

MK: Joe and Georgia are almost exactly the same in person as they are on screen, only maybe a little less potty mouth on camera. They both could play off each other and understood each others' timing, so it works for me.

I get asked all the time about their on-screen relationship: Are they dating, are they friends, are they married? To me it's not a relationship film. It doesn't matter. Maybe they're dating. Maybe they're married. Maybe they're having sex. Who cares? Everyone knows two people in a weird relationship, where they aren't married but are just always together. I just wanted to get something that was open to interpretation. Just two great people, who are great together, stuck in a bizarre and gory situation.

SCARS: 100 TEARS finally came to DVD in the US late last year. Was it cut down from what was shown at the film festivals?

MK: Ah yes, whatever happened to the NC-17 rating? Well, Anthem simply could not release it as NC-17 all their retailers would not carry it, so it's a hard sell. Of course I fought not to cut the gore, and Anthem fully backs my decision not to make cuts, but we had to do something that changed the film.

Uncut and unrated is the way to go. So there are a few gore gags that have been extended and/or added back in from the original cut, as well as some miscellaneous walking and dialogue that seemed to drag that's now gone. But yes, it's a little bloodier and gorier than what was seen

about every killer clown movie ever made, from big budget stuff, to no budget stuff. I just wanted to make my contribution – I think clowns should be something to be feared. There's something not right about them, children know it, and that's why we were afraid of them. Hell, even some grown-ups have this strange fear of clowns they can't shake.

I grew up on slasher movies and love extreme gore, so for me, 100 TEARS is two tastes that taste great together. Whether or not it's everyone's cup of coffee, well, not everyone is going to like it. Either it's not gory enough or there's too much gore, there's too much plot or not enough plot, or bad acting. Either way, it's something I just wanted to do and I'm happy I've done it.

SCARS: Jack Amos was a perfect cast as Gurdy. Was he a first choice? Did he audition for the role?

MK: Our first choice was Mungo Mckay

at the festivals.

SCARS: The movie was released in France and Germany first. Was the response the same as here?

MK: Hard to tell. Germany had a great response to the amount of gore in the film, which is funny because it's cut to shit so much of the really gory scenes are gone.

SCARS: You worked with Lionsgate and the band Soulidium for a music video for SAW IV to be released on a special edition DVD. Whatever happened with that?

MK: A few months before SAW IV was to be released I was approached by the band because they landed a song called "Trapped" on the soundtrack. They wanted a video to accompany it. Lionsgate offered their record label footage from the film to be included, but I passed on the footage (even though I wanted to see the traps they have in the next installment).

My opinion of music videos that are based on movie footage can best be summed up with Guns N' Roses and the video for TERMINATOR 2. Just fucking lame. So I wanted to make my own mini SAW movie, build our own traps, build our own Billy the puppet and all the sets and just have fun with it. I managed to get in a few gore gags, like someone cutting off their own foot, like in the first film.

As far as if it will ever be seen remains unclear. It's on YouTube and fans of the band really dig it. But since the video the band has changed record labels, so I'm not sure what's going to happen with it. It didn't appear on the Saw IV DVD, so I'm supposed to be waiting for a special edition.

SCARS: You have been working a lot with Mel House - first on CLOSET SPACE and next on WALKING DISTANCE. What has that been like?

MK: Mel House is a fucking insane genius, his ideas are so out there, and really challenge me artistically. Especially with such small budgets. He really goes above and beyond what can be done or should be done on a low budget. He has so many twisted nightmarish ideas of people melting, twisted flesh, slimy tentacles, weird

shit here, weird shit there, burned up demons that prowl around, full size creatures, lots of phallic and sexual innuendo things going on. It's always something crazy.

It's fun, exhausting, and rewarding to work with him. He pushes me to new things I've never gotten to do before. I love getting away out of the box once in a while, and Mel gives me the opportunity to do more than body parts and gore films.

SCARS: How was it working with Reggie Bannister (PHANTASM/BUBBA HOTEP) on WALKING DISTANCE?

MK: There is no cooler cat than Reggie. He's the most laid back, easy going guy there is. He's a real professional who knows his marks and his timing and is up for any suggestion to make the film more real.

SCARS: You have been sitting on a story called BABY DOLL for a few years now. Is filming starting soon?

MK: BABYDOLL has been a pet project for years, a constantly stop-start thing, sometimes with a good-sized budget and sometimes with no budget. We've shot scenes on 35mm, only to have investors back out. Sometimes, other projects just get in the way. It will happen one day. I'm going to "will" this story into existence come hell or high water. It's just a matter of timing.

SCARS: What's next for you?

MK: I'd like to go back to directing. In

the meantime, I'm focused on FX. WALKING DISTANCE is wrapped, but occasionally Mel and I get together and punch things up a bit. We have a pretty big action film coming up in New Orleans. Even though it isn't a horror film, it's got some pretty horrible things happening to people in it - which is where Oddtopsy FX steps in. There's also a zombie project on the horizon, which should be fun.

SCARS: Being surrounded by horror and gore all the time, what scares you?

MK: What scares me is really silly - my biggest phobia is actually blood. I cannot stand the real thing. It creeps me out to see it or be near it. And damn if I haven't nicked myself a time or two sculpting foam with a razor knife. I just turn all pasty white, get the sweats, and teeter like a drunk clown. Irony at it's finest. Clowns scared the shit



out of me as a kid, same with ventriloquist dummies and people with deformities or missing limbs. It's all still very unsettling to me.

SCARS: Who is your favorite movie monster?

MK: I like a lot, but my favorite would be the Shunting sequence at the end of SOCIETY. Does that count as a monster? It's a weird body pile of a bunch of perverted old rich people, melded together. It's big and bizarre. Screaming Mad George is one of my favorite creature makers.

SCARS: What do you think of parents letting their kids watch horror films?

MK: Let the kids watch them. No one is too young for horror films. I don't believe watching them causes kids to become psychos or mentally disturbed maniacs. Yes, they'll get nightmares, but eventually they'll get over their fears. We all grow up eventually and understand it's all make believe.

I think it creates fond memories of what it was like to truly be afraid after watching a movie – to turn the lights on when you enter a room, to check the closet before you go to bed. I think a lot of kids have been deprived of fear because parents are

too afraid to let their children become afraid. It's a good emotion to know. Parents, don't deprive your kids! But some sexually graphic situations in movies may not be a good idea – I wouldn't recommend letting your kids watch the uncut version of CALIGULA.

SCARS: Anything else to add?

MK: Remakes are in these days. I can't figure out how and why they're getting made. I haven't met a single fan who's liked the idea of seeing our favorite films sucked up and crapped out of the Hollywood septic tank. So I have to go on the record: I support Hollywood remakes! Remake as much as you can, trash as much as you want. In the end, it's only helping the little guy, Hollywood's ugly stepchild, the independent filmmaker. Remaking the same shit eliminates the competition of original material. So I'm fine with it. I may never have their budget, but I can't see the point in making something that's already been done before. Remember when Hollywood was built by risk takers?

To find out more on Marcus Koch, 100 TEARS or any other projects hit him up on ZombieFriends at www.zombiefriends.com/oddtopsy or the official 100 TEARS site www.zombiefriends.com/100Tears.



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THE SPAGHETTI WESTERN

A GRINDHOUSE STAPLE

By 42nd Street Pete

In the late 60's, everyone was talking about a new type of western, "A Fistful of Dollars." It starred a virtually unknown TV star, Clint Eastwood. Clint had been in the hit TV series "Rawhide," as Eric Fleming's sidekick, Rowdy Yates. Eastwood had been in "Revenge of the Creature" and "Tarantula," B movies from Universal Pictures.

Universal felt that Clint wasn't going to amount to much, so he and his friend, Burt Reynolds, were both let go on the same day. Eastwood had an offer to go to Italy and star in an uncredited remake of the Japanese samurai classic, "Yojimbo." This time it was in a western setting and pitted a lone gunman against two warring families.

Thus The Man with No Name was born. Eastwood wore a ragged poncho, black jeans and had a stubby cigarillo in his mouth. He was also fast enough to gun down five men at once. Critics were appalled by the violence, but "Dollars" was a big hit here as well as Europe.

Euro westerns had been around for a while, but were not shown theatrically in the US, like "Dollars" was. "Dollars" was a lot more violent than any of the westerns done in this country. The critics were quick to pounce on this fact and denounced "Dollars" as being excessively violent. United Artists released "Dollars" as it being, "the first motion picture of its kind...it won't be the last."

Of course the credits had to be "anglicized" for American audiences. Head villain, Gian Maria Volonte, became Johnny Wells. S. Rupp & Joe Edgar were other phony names. "Dollars" did good business and warranted a sequel. Director Sergio Leone wanted a second American to co star with Eastwood. His first choices were Lee Marvin, Charles Bronson and some

other not yet big names. Marvin was filming "Cat Ballou," Bronson, who had been offered the title role in "Dollars," once again turned down the offer saying that this was a fluke and it would never happen again.

Leone then remembered one of the killers from "High Noon," Lee Van Cleef. Lee was another WWII vet who used the GI bill to take up acting. He had done two Sci Fi films, "Beast from 20,000 Fathoms" and "It Conquered the World." He usually was typecast as a villain, and wasn't real happy about the way his career was going. He was injured in a car accident and when Leone contacted him, he was painting for a living. Leone convinced him that his offer was genuine, so Van Cleef headed off to Italy and made "For a Few Dollars More."

"For a Few Dollars More" boasted an impressive international cast. Gian Maria Volonte returned as the psychotic, dope smoking bandit, Indio. Klaus Kinski was a hunchback killer. Regulars included Mario Brega, Luigi Pistilli, and Joe Eggar. Van Cleef was cast as Cornel Douglas Mortimer, a soldier turned bounty hunter. Eastwood is a rival bounty hunter. When Indio breaks out of jail, the price on his head is \$10,000. Both hunters want Indio, but not for the same reason. It seemed Indio raped and killed Mortimer's sister.

This is where the film becomes Van Cleef's. Although both he and Eastwood

are bounty hunters, Mortimer is the more moral of the two. He is out for revenge, not just money. Eastwood's sole concern is getting the cash. "For a Few Dollars More" was a big hit, both here and all over the world. Again, the critics were quick to pounce on the violent aspects of the film. One scene that seemed to really piss them off was when a stoned out Indio starts to crush a couple of cockroaches and the camera lingers on the twitching bugs.

Leone's next project was the epic "The Good, the Bad & the Ugly." Once again Charles Bronson was offered a role and again turned it down. Eli Wallach took the role of Tuco. Wallach had played a Mexican bandit in "The Magnificent Seven." His portrayal of Tuco pretty much stole the film. Van Cleef played the cold blooded killer, Angel Eyes, an immoral killer who enjoys his work. This film just blew the others away and Eastwood hung up his poncho and returned to Hollywood.

Lee Van Cleef was now the king of spaghetti westerns. He followed up The Good, the Bad & the Ugly" with "The Big Gundown," where the ads screamed, "Mister Ugly is back." Van Cleef did a string of westerns and some other Euro films: "Day of Anger," "Badman's River," "El Condor," "The Grand Duel," "Take a Hard Ride," "Kid Vengeance," "Sabata," "The Return of Sabata," "Escape from Cell Block 13" and others.

Sabata was one of his best as he played a



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**"THE GOOD,
THE BAD &
THE UGLY"**

LEE VAN CLEEF ALDO GIUFFRÈ MARCO BREGA
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gunman, dressed impeccably in black, who never misses a shot. The ads read, "The Man with the Gunsite Eyes Comes to Kill." Great action sequences and a cast of quirky characters, Banjo (William Berger), Carrincha (Pedro Sanchez), and Indio (Nick Jordan) make this a good watch. Van Cleef was a huge star in Europe, commanding \$400,000 a film.

According to his agent, he could have been as big a star as Eastwood or Bronson if he had returned to the US sooner than he did. Van Cleef liked working abroad, but after "Sabata," he did some films like "Kid Vengeance," "God's Gun" and "Bad Man's River" which weren't up to par. One of my memories of 42nd Street was a huge standee of Van Cleef as Sabata on one theater.

Van Cleef returned to the states and appeared in "Escape from New York," a TV series, "The Master," "The Octogon," and others. His last major role was in Fred Olen Ray's "Armed Response." He died at age 64 in 1989 of a heart attack.

American actors were in demand for these westerns. Stars that were on the down slide found work here. John Ireland, Woody Strode, "Boot Hill," Jack Elam, "Once Upon a Time in the West," Robert Ryan, "A Minute to Pray, a Second to Die," Arthur Kennedy, Van Heflin, "The Ruthless Four," Ed Byrnes, "Seven Winchester for a Massacre," Ty Hardin, "Doomsday," Eli Wallach, "Ace High," Burt Reynolds, "Navajo Joe," Joseph Cotton, "The Hell Benders," Cameron Mitchell, "Minnetota Clay," Alex Nicol, "Gunfighters of Casa Grande," Jack Palance, "A Professional Gun," Frank Wolfe, "The Great Silence," William Berger, "Sabata," Gilbert Roland, "Any Gun Can Play" and many others.

Of course there was a stock company of European actors who became familiar faces in these epics. Gian Maria Volonte (who was Leone's first choice for role of Tuco) Mario Brega, Luigi Pistilli, Robert Hundar, Anthony Dawson, Aldo Sambrell, Tomas Milian, Richard Palacios, Giuliano Gemma and others.

One of the biggest names in Europe made a fortune in the spaghetti, Klaus Kinski. Kinski had been appearing in films since 1948, usually in the Edgar Wallace films



shot in West Germany. He usually played Nazis, killers or psychos. Kinski had fought in WWII and was wounded and put in a POW camp. He turned to acting after the war.

He appeared in "The Ruthless Four," "Bullet for the General," "Shanghai Joe" and one of the greatest spaghetti westerns never seen, "The Great Silence" (as "El Tigre" or "Loco" in some prints). This was probably Kinski's greatest role in a spaghetti western, playing a completely amoral bounty hunter, not above gunning down a son in front of his mother. Jean-Louis Trintignant played the mute, Silence, a killer whose vocal cords were cut by bounty hunters when he was a child. He retaliates by shooting the thumbs off of the bounty hunters he encounters.

"Silence" was directed by another Sergio, Sergio Corbucci, who had directed a few movies for Albert Band, (Charlie's father) like "The Hellbenders" and "The Tramp-Plers." "Silence" was too downbeat for American audiences, and it was never released here. In the climax, all the sympathetic characters are massacred by Loco and his gang. It is a painfully protracted shoot out that seems to last forever instead of a couple of minutes. A more upbeat ending was shot for the Asian and South African markets. That footage appears on the DVD, but the soundtrack was lost.

Kinski made bank on his spaghetti westerns. He bought a castle and was fond of Rolls Royces. He, like Van Cleef, came to Hollywood, but he never achieved the fame here that he did in Europe. He wound up "starring" in low budget fare like "Android," "Crawlspace," and "Creature." He co starred with another rowdy actor, Oliver Reed, in Venom. Needless to say the two didn't get along well. Kinski found international fame working with director Werner Herzog. His autobiography, "All I Need is Love," was one of the most vicious attacks on the film business ever written. It was withdrawn from circulation due to legal problems.

Kinski was never afraid to speak up when he thought a director was bad. His on set tirades were legendary. Although he was getting top dollar for the westerns, he was quoted as saying, "Westerns got shittier and shittier, the so called directors got lousier and lousier." Kinski only made

them to sustain his extravagant lifestyle. Kinski died in 1991 at age 65.

Sergio Corbucci directed several more westerns. His most famous was "Django," a film that got a spotty release here and was outright banned in the UK. "Django" starred Corbucci "discovery" Franco Nero. Nero had appeared previously in Corbucci's "The Trampers." "Django" was a little too violent for some tastes. The opening credits have Django entering this dirty, muddy town, dragging a coffin with a machine gun in it.

As in the first "Dollars" film, Corbucci has Django in the midst of two warring factions, the KKK and a band of Mexican bandits. Django plays the two against each other with dire consequences. After a double cross, Django's hands are crushed by the gang. In a painfully protracted sequence, Django removes the trigger guard of his pistol with his teeth. He balances the pistol on a tombstone as his enemies close in for the kill.

Corbucci seemed to have a flair for broken or flawed heroes. Django's crushed hands, the mute Silence and the almost blind gun-fighter in "Minnesota Clay."

"Django" was a huge hit in Europe. Over 40 films were made with the name Django in them to cash in on the original. The only "official" sequel was "Django Strikes Again," which a lot of people didn't like. Nero once again dusted off his machine gun and went to work. The original "Django" suffered from horrible dubbing. Actor Fred Ward was the voice of Django.

Franco Nero continued to do spaghetti westerns. Nero realized that the American West was made up of a lot of different nationalities. After "Texas Addido," he started using his own voice as he played characters of Polish and Swedish descent. In *The Professional Gun*, released here as "The Mercenary," he is The Polack. "The Professional Gun" was also directed by Corbucci. Nero became an international



star, both here and abroad. He did a lot more westerns, including "Keoma" and "Deaf Smith & Johnny Ears," along with crime thrillers, and gaillos. He was in *Die Hard 2* as renegade South American general.

Charles Bronson had turned down the lead in "A Fistful of Dollars" as he thought the script sucked. When he was offered the second lead in "For a Few Dollars More," he just turned it down flat. He was considered for the role of Angel Eyes in "The Good, the Bad & the Ugly," but was doing "The Dirty Dozen" at the time. Bronson did appear in "Once Upon a Time in the West" by Leone. Unfortunately, the film flopped in America due to Henry Fonda being cast against type as a villain.

There is an interesting story about "Once Upon a Time in the West." Leone originally wanted to segway the Old West into the new West. He wanted Eastwood, Van Cleef and Wallach to be the gunmen who were waiting for Bronson at the train station. While Van Cleef and Wallach agreed to do it, Eastwood out right refused. Leone and Eastwood had been at odds over the huge fee Eastwood commanded for "The Good, the Bad & the Ugly." The three were replaced by Jack Elam (who's good eye stole the show in the opening sequence) Woody Strode and Al Mullock.

After "Once Upon a Time in the West," Bronson did one other spaghetti type western, "Red Sun." A sort of East meets West thing with Bronson being doubled crossed by his partner, Alan Delion, during a train robbery. A rare sword is stolen from a visiting Japanese Ambassador, so Bronson is forced to team up with samurai, Toshiro Mifune to recover it. "Red Sun" also starred Ursula Andress, Capucine and Anthony Dawson. It was released here in a cut down 83 minute version with a lot of





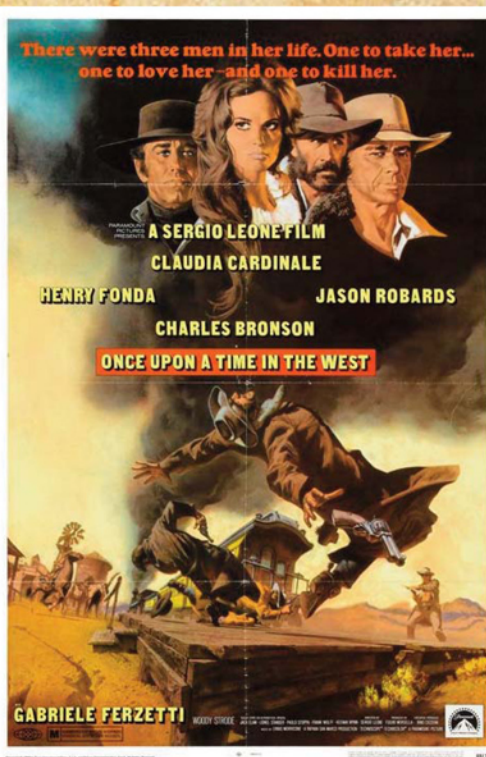
Leone originally wanted to segway the Old West into the new West. He wanted Eastwood, Van Cleef and Wallach to be the gunmen who were

the violence edited out. It has yet to see a domestic DVD release. The "Far East meets the American West" continued with films with Shanghai Joe and The Stranger and the Gunfighter.

At this time, Bronson had been a huge star in Europe and after "Death Wish," he was a huge star here. You sort of wonder what would have happened if he had taken any of the roles Leone had offered. Leone's final western was "My Name is Nobody" with Henry Fonda and Terrence Hill (Mario Girotti). "Nobody" was sort of a parody; comedy had been creeping into the genre. Hill had also done the "Trinity Series" with strong man Bud Spencer (Carlo Pedersoli), who had won a silver medal for swimming at the 1952 Olympics. The comedy team of Hill and Spencer was a big hit with all ages in Europe. Spencer had been in "Today it's Me... Tomorrow it's You," "Beyond the Law," and "Five Man Army," before teaming up with Hill. Hill got a shot at American stardom in a film about the Foreign Legion called "March or Die" with Gene Hackman. Hill, walking across the desert with a machine gun, harkened back to his

waiting for Bronson at the train station.

Django portrayal in "Django Get a Coffin Ready." The film was a flop and Hill returned to Italy.



By the mid 70's spaghetti westerns were fading away. Films that were shot in Europe usually didn't get here for three or four years after they ran in Europe. By the end of the 70's they had drifted into self parody. A lot of the actors either returned to the US or jumped on the horror/gore films that were now being churned out in Italy and Spain. Spaghetti westerns were ideal Grindhouse and Drive In fodder. Actors like Van Cleef, Kinski, Nero, Hill and others became legendary figures. Theater operators knew that these names equaled box office dollars. "Shanghai Joe" was the last Spaghetti western that I saw in the Embassy Theater before it was too dangerous of an area to go to. Sadly, a lot of these films have not been released on DVD so a new generation can't see what they have only heard and read about. For at least a decade, spaghetti westerns were a grindhouse staple. Be it the top or bottom half of a double or even triple bill, the films always had a devoted following.



WALKING DISTANCE

Interview by
Will Sanders

Mel House is no stranger to the genre. Looking at his resume, one can see he's had his fingers in a lot of indy horror over the past few years. Many of these films have graced the pages of **SCARS** since its inception and I'm sure his name will be one not soon forgotten.

SCARS was lucky enough to ask Mel a few questions about what makes him tick and what it takes to go the Distance...

SCARS: What inspired you to start making films?

MEL HOUSE: Seeing "A Nightmare on Elm Street." That's pretty much the first thing that I remember actually making me go "I want to do THAT!" I had a pretty solid grasp of the fantastic nature of horror cinema as a kid...which is to say that I knew it was all make-believe, even at a young age. So when I saw the blood fountain erupt out of Glen's bed, that pretty much sealed it for me. Add on to that the cumulative effect of watching hundreds more movies, reading tons of comics and Stephen King, and here we are.





SCARS: We were out at Texas Frightmare Weekend this year, where Loyd Cryer (Creator/Organizer) was telling us that when he started the convention, everyone said "A horror convention in Texas, would never work! You're crazy!" Those of us who attended TFW and Fearfest know that Horror conventions in Texas, do very well. It also seems like Texas is the capital of Horror Indie Films here lately. Why do you think Texas has become such a horror loving place, being in the bible belt... or do you believe it always has been?

MH: I think it always has been – I mean it's the second largest state in the U.S., and we have the fourth largest city (Houston), as well as the fourth largest metropolitan area (Dallas/Ft. Worth), and two prestigious film schools (UT Austin and UNT). Throw the iconoclasm (and subsequent iconography) of "Texas Chainsaw Massacre" into the mix and Texas becomes a can't miss proposition for horror and dark entertainment.

I'm sure our inherent "red-state" ness also plays a factor, although I think it pertains more to a reaction against the religious and classically "conservative" side of things rather than the political definition of "conservative." People tend to forget those terms aren't exactly interchangeable.

SCARS: You describe yourself as a mu-

latto film-maker. Has that been an issue being a film-maker from the south?

MH: Not as of yet. Most people don't even realize that I'm half-Black, so maybe I'm flying under their radar...you know, "one of the good ones." Then again, we just elected a mulatto president, so hopefully it won't ever become an issue.

This always makes me think about seeing the Hughes Brothers at a Fangoria Weekend of Horrors a few years back. They were on the promotional tour for "From Hell," and were discussing the process of getting the gig. By virtue of the fact that Allen and Albert Hughes are multiracial (but look "pretty Black" – they're actually ½ Black, and ½ Armenian, I think), producers kept waffling on giving them the job directing a period piece about Jack The Ripper. I'm sure it didn't help their case that their entire oeuvre up to that point was "urban gangsta," but still...the point was that the Hughes' wanted to be viewed not as "Black Directors", just "Directors." And now they're doing a post-apocalyptic Western, so I guess it worked out.

SCARS: Your first film was "Fade to Black" in 2001, can you tell us a little about that film?

MH: "Fade to Black" was pretty much my fumbling first attempt at a feature. It's my

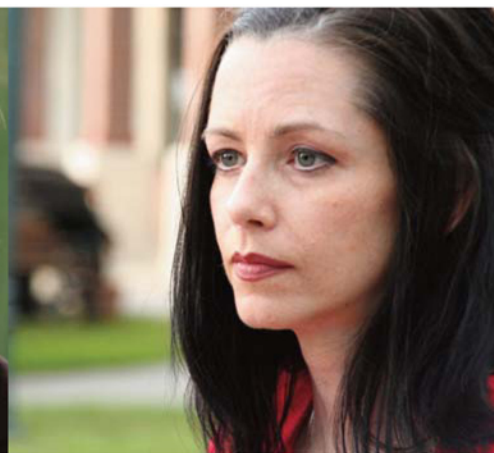
attempt at doing a Hitchcock riff at the age of 23. Like most first features, it's pretty rough...actually, these days I find it mostly unwatchable. But...you have to start somewhere, and I had access to equipment, crew, and several actors that were game for it. I definitely learned a lot, and crossed that threshold into actually becoming a "director," so for that I'm thankful to the project. That, and it only cost me \$300. I may release it as a curiosity one day, but it's more likely that I'll let it die a natural death.

SCARS: You then jumped on "Witchcraft 13," how did that project come about?

MH: "Fade to Black" got into a festival where I met the eventual producers of the witch movie. A series of events led me into agreeing to take on the project, which was cumulatively one of the worst experiences of my life. The less said about it, the better.

SCARS: Your name seems to come up a lot since "Closet Space." Did you think when you shot the film, that it would get as big a reaction as it did?

MH: Not really – although I kind of figured that horror fans were somewhat tired of slasher and zombie flicks (especially in the indie realm), and might be willing to check out something different. Promotinally, it pretty much was just me behind



a computer, or going to conventions and getting the word out. I'm not a big fan of the hard sell, push-push-push approach...I'm more concerned with just letting people know that a project exists, and if they're into it, things will progress from there. Fortunately, larger, respected outlets like Fangoria and Dread Central got behind "Closet Space" early on, and offered us lots of exposure (and positive reviews), so that helped kick things up another level. We also benefited a lot from our perceived Lovecraft association...although "Closet Space" isn't an adaptation of any H.P.'s stories (and never purported to be), there are definite similarities that appealed to the Cthulhuan crowd. I mean, if you have tentacles, wacky pseudoscience, and "nameless, faceless creatures," you're pretty much going to be coming from Arkham in one way or another, I guess. I also decided to have a couple of folks wear Miskatonic University t-shirts in the movie as a neat little shout-out. Of course, once people see the movie they wonder how in the hell CS is an adaptation of a Lovecraft story...but

we always said that it was "influenced" by some of that stuff, not based on it. At any rate, that angle got us noticed as well. I still get festival invites for "Closet Space" to this day – now if only we could get it out on DVD Stateside.

SCARS: You were also co-producer of one of our favorite indie films "100 Tears." (Out now on DVD.) How did you come to be involved in that production?

MH: I worked with Marcus on "Closet Space," and he did a great job pulling off so much for so little. As a result, I let him know that I'd be willing to help him out in any way possible on any of his projects. I wasn't able to do a whole hell of a lot on "100 Tears" (being firmly entrenched in post on "Closet Space"), but I tried to kick in a little where I could.

SCARS: With you co-producing "100 Tears" and Marcus doing FX on "Closet Space" and your next film "Walking Distance," I have started calling you and Marcus the Duo of Destruction & Mayhem.

You both seem to work very well together. Would you say the same?

MH: Yeah, I would say so. We have an unofficial motto: "It's not good until it's weird." Basically we both come from the same Cronenberg/Gordon/Lynch/Miike approach to horror (both what we make and what we watch). We bonded over the love for anything that's not just stabbing, splatter, and body parts. And we both hate vampires. And witches.

At any rate, I know that I can pretty much throw any fucked-up idea at Marcus and he can figure out how to make it happen. Maybe not always as initially envisioned, but always very nasty, and always very original.

I have to say that your nickname for us sounds very Jack Kirby-esque. We should do a comic book.

SCARS: Can you tell us a little about Walking Distance?



MH: Hm. Where to begin? Basically, “Walking Distance” revolves around a small enclave community that’s popped up around this mysterious “facility.” The community is supposed to be cozy, tight-knit, and mostly walkable (hence the title). Everything seems okay, but then reports of very strange activity start popping up, folks start disappearing, people begin to get sick for no real reason, people start seeing things that may or may not be real, etc. Of course, some other individuals take notice of these occurrences, and that’s when the REALLY wacky shit starts to go down.

SCARS: I talked with Reggie Bannister at Fright Night Film Festival about “Walking Distance” and filming with you, can you tell your side of the story? How was it working with the great Regman?

MH: Working with Reggie was awesome. He’s a fabulously laid back guy, easy to get along and work with, but very professional at the same time. We talked a lot about the character he plays (Joseph Webber) prior to Reg arriving on set, and all of his ideas were great, and fit right in line with how I envisioned the character. Reg definitely jumped right in to the quagmire of Webber’s mind, and now that I’m deep in the edit, I’m really starting to notice how nuanced his performance in WD really is. I think people will enjoy it... it’s definitely not “Phantasm” Reggie. Although there WERE times that Reggie

drove Webber’s car as if it was the Hemi ‘Cuda and not a Ford Taurus.

SCARS: Was Reggie a first pick for the character Joseph Webber who as he pointed out is a pedophile?

MH: That character actually has a pretty interesting history. Wayyyyyy back when I initially wrote the first version of “Walking Distance” (in the late 90’s), I was deluding myself into thinking that I could interest a certain Springwood Slasher in the role. I mean, I’m a HUGE “Nightmare on Elm Street” fan, and Webber is a child predator. It follows, you know? Once I pulled out the script late last year, and began retooling the thing to shoot, I started to think about actors who’s work I really respected, who I’d like to work with, and most importantly, who’d be interested in playing the role of a convicted pedophile. Reggie was at the top of the “I’d love to, but there’s no way in hell we can get him” file. I never thought in a million years that Reg would be into it, for whatever reason. But I got him the script, and sure enough, he dug it. What’s more, he dug the weirder, darker aspects of the thing, and was willing to jump in head-long, which made him the perfect choice.

SCARS: “Walking Distance” also has Adrienne King from “Friday The 13th” cast as Louise Strack. Can you tell a little about her character?

MH: Another interesting character history. “Louise Strack” was actually originally “Louis Strack” – the role was written for a guy. Kind of a “Jim Profit”-type. Strack basically is the head of the mysterious “facility,” and by extension, is the de facto head of the community that surrounds it. Her intentions are apparently altruistic, as she’s working on research to cure some very sick people, but her motives, methods, and agenda do come into question a time or two.

SCARS: Was Adrienne King a first choice and was she hard to get for the film?

MH: As mentioned above, Strack was initially supposed to be a dude, but once Adrienne expressed interest in the role, I immediately began to re-assess things. I had sent along the script and offered her a smaller role, without even considering the Strack thing. Adrienne loved the script and wanted to be a larger part of it. I initially thought about increasing the size of the original role...but then it hit me...why don’t I make Strack a woman? Once I talked about it with Adrienne, she had some great takes on Strack from a feminine angle, and was on board. The “sex change” also instantly added some great dynamics/layers to other characters that Strack interacts with. The best part of it all was that I don’t think I rewrote anything other than changing some references that other characters made to Strack... “him”





to “her” and that sort of thing. Everything else just took on new shades...and then I wondered why I hadn’t made Strack female from the get-go.

My friend Jonah, who is a singer-songwriter, once said: “if I were as smart as my songs, I’d be pretty fucking smart.” Which shouldn’t be construed as some douche bag statement that his songs are heady, heartbreaking works of staggering genius or anything - I take it to mean that the work that flows out of him on a somewhat subconscious level actually carries hidden meaning and truth that his conscious mind is not aware of, but may be-

come apparent later, on reflection. I think that sums up the Strack thing pretty well. “He” was always a “she,” initially unbeknownst to me.

SCARS: You have been mentioned by every horror news source on the net and seem to be the next name in horror, what is next for Mel House?

MH: I don’t know about all that, but it does seem that a few people that I respect and admire think I’m doing good work, so that’s enough for me. That and a big fat

residual check. But seriously, the opportunity to work with people like Reggie, Adrienne, Debbie Rochon, Glenn Morshower, Kathy Lamkin...that’s pretty damn cool, especially since we are still firmly in the land of low-budget moviemaking with “Walking Distance.” I hope things continue on in that regard. I still would pretty much give my non-existent soul to work with Robert Englund.

Next up for me is a ghost movie...kind of old-school creepy/scary, like “The Changeling.” At least that’s what I hope it’s like. It’s got some racial commentary in it as well, so I think it’s the right climate for it... especially after some of the Obama “jokes” I heard on November 5th.

SCARS: When coming across the state line, I crossed the Welcome to Texas sign on I-20 that says “Proud Home of George W. Bush.” Being from Texas, are you proud of George W. Bush? I have to ask this to everyone from Texas.

MH: Not particularly.

SCARS: What is your favorite horror film?

MH: You’ve probably already guessed this, but it’s “A Nightmare on Elm Street.”

SCARS: Anything else that you would like to add?

MH: I’d just like to remind everyone to seek out horror in all its forms – not just the B.S. that Hollywood would have you believe typifies the genre. Make sure you go see “Let The Right One In” during its art-house release. Rent stuff like “The Signal” or “Jack Brooks: Monster Slayer.” Buy the “From Beyond” special edition DVD. Pick up an issue of “The Walking Dead.” Horror is much more than slasher movies, remakes, and the “Saw” series.

**WOULD YOU SAY NO TO THIS?
WE THOUGHT NOT.**

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Absence Of Malice **Life After Dark**

Interview by Raymond Dowaliby
Photography by Kooking Productions





She may no longer be the reigning Miss Horrorfest, but Scars has never forgotten the ample talents of Mistress Malice. Read up on what Malice has been doing since ditching the mohawk, and the one scene you WON'T want to miss in any movie this year.

SCARS: So it's been a year or more since your crowning of Miss Horrorfest and you have now passed the torch. Tell us a little bit about what the year was like for you.

MALICE: This year was fantastic for me. Being Miss Horrorfest opened up so many doors and I've met some really amazing people. I would definitely have to say that being part of "The Butterfly Effect: Revelation" was really just the icing on the cake.

SCARS: Was being in "The Butterfly Effect: Revelation" everything you ever hoped it would be? I also hear you take the twins out in it, can you confirm?

MALICE: Being part of the film fulfilled a dream of mine to be in a movie. It's an experience that I'll never forget, and who knows? Maybe it will lead to other roles. And for the record... Yes, I have a topless scene in the film. You're going to get an eye-full. Or should I say two?

SCARS: Now that you're in the running for new projects, what do you have slated for 2009? Do you have any other movie roles in the works?

MALICE: I've read a script recently, and there has been some mention of me participating in some or one of next year's "8 Films to Die For." However, I cannot confirm whether or not this will actually happen. It has been talked about though. I've also

done some modeling, but as far as that goes, it's not something that I want to pursue as a career. I model for fun, and to build up my portfolio. I will more than likely have some appearances throughout the year, for sure.

SCARS: Where do you want to be 5 years from now?

MALICE: That's kind of a hard question for me. It would be easy for me to say that I want to be a big movie star and have lots of money and be "living the dream" out here in Hollywood. But to be honest, lately I've been feeling the urge to go back to school. I've got some hours that I would like to finish up, and I would like to know that no matter what happens to me as far as my film/modeling career goes, that I have something to fall back on that I actually enjoy in case being a movie star doesn't work out. So I guess I would say in 5 years, the only thing that I want is to be happy. I could be a librarian for all I know, but if I'm happy that's all that matters. (I don't want to be a librarian by the way.)

SCARS: What do you have to say to anyone who wants "in" to the indie industry? Be honest... We know how rough it can be!

MALICE: I would say just go for it. Who knows what might happen? If one year ago you had told me that at this time in my life I would be in a movie, living in Los Angeles, and modeling, I never would have believed it. If you don't pursue your dreams, you will always wonder "what if"? Now... I will never have to wonder. And that feels pretty damn great.

THE DOWDLE BROTHERS

SEEING FEAR THROUGH THEIR EYES

by Fallon Masterson



SCARS: So you guys just got back from location scouting in Asia, how was that? And do you guys EVER get sick of each other?

JED: Scouting in Asia was incredible. The script is set in Cambodia, but we're going to shoot it in Thailand. We spent the first part of the trip in Cambodia just gathering as many details as we could that are unique to that country. Then we toured Thailand looking for locations that best resemble the look and feel of Phnom Penh. It was a really fun trip, especially considering all three of our previous films were shot in LA so scouting in Asia felt pretty exotic to us.

DD: Amazingly, we don't really ever get sick of each other. We shared a room growing up, maybe we've just become numb to each other over the years. It helps that we have extremely similar tastes, and we love working, so it's pretty easy to be around each other a lot.

JED: No, I never get sick of Drew. Sometimes I get sick of myself for Drew's sake! But I never get sick of him. Who wouldn't want someone who's always even-keeled, has great judgment, and is always looking

In the case of the Dowdle brothers, it's death to sibling rivalry. We're not sure what kind of household John Erick and Drew Dowdle grew up in that's led to this gruesome two-some's creation of such extreme horror, but hey, at least they get along! Taking some time from their jet-setting schedule (no, really), the Dowdles fill us in on what's going on with their much anticipated movie, "The Poughkeepsie Tapes;" their rendition of the Spanish ultra-hit "Rec," "Quarantine;" and on what we can expect next.

out for me? I start to freak out when Drew's not around. I can't imagine doing this stuff alone. It wouldn't be nearly as fun.

SCARS: What's the project?

DD: "The Coup." It's about an American family that relocates to Cambodia just as a violent coup erupts. The streets quickly devolve into chaos, and our family is left in a desperate attempt to escape the country without knowing a soul. It's a very intense story.



JED: It's got (non-supernatural) horror elements and feels very horror-like, but also has a thriller vibe about it.

SCARS: You've co-written "Quarantine" and "The Poughkeepsie Tapes." What's that like? Does one of you kind of focus on one aspect more than the other?

DD: We usually work on the story and bat that around for some time until we think the structure is fleshed out and ready to be written, then John will go off and pretty much write the first draft in isolation. Then we'll go back and forth with drafts until we feel it's ready to go.

JED: Drew is like the one with the bull-whip going, "Dance, Monkey!" and whipping me while I bang nonsense into the keyboard. He then sifts through it and helps make sense of it all.

SCARS: How did you approach "Quarantine," both with the screenplay and, John, with direction? And what about the original, "Rec," drew you in so much?

DD: When we were hired for "Quarantine," "Rec" wasn't finished yet and neither of us had seen it. We had their

screenplay and a 2-minute promo, and from that we could tell it was going to be an amazing film. Our previous film, "The Poughkeepsie Tapes," had a found footage element to it and we really enjoyed shooting in that style. It's challenging, but the end product feels very immediate and intense. I remember watching the "Rec" promo together, and it was perhaps the biggest no-brainer in our careers. We immediately knew we wanted the job very bad.

Our general approach was not to fix what ain't broken. We felt like it was our job to protect the essence of "Rec" and make "Quarantine" feel just as gritty and real and violent. But with that in mind, we thought there were elements of the film that could be amplified. We focused on where we thought we could make it better and didn't try to reinvent the movie.

JED: We wanted to intensify both what was inside the building and what was trapping them from the outside. I also wanted to make much less use of editing. We wanted to shoot whole segments of the film in one-shots, to amplify the feeling of reality. If the cameraman is not turning off his camera at a moment, there is no cut. It's a very tricky way to shoot a film, because you don't shoot it in pieces and then assemble it later. It has to all be right on set. It was a great challenge. Very difficult, but very rewarding.

SCARS: Did you have any of that classic "spooky" stuff happen on-set you sometimes hear about during supernatural

movie filmings?

DD: We had a couple strange things happen, the biggest one wasn't very supernatural but was probably pretty dangerous. We shot almost all of the film on a stage on the Sony lot. One morning as we were about to roll camera, smoke started coming up through the floor. The alarm went off and we were evacuated and the full nine. Turns out a small fire had started underneath our stage and was spreading. Thankfully there are fire fighters on the lot. They ripped a hole in the floor with chainsaws and hosed it down, and in an

hour we were shooting again. The set

burning down mid-shoot would have been extremely problematic.

JED: We also all got horribly sick. It's scary making a movie about a spreading infection while everyone on set is about to drop from sickness. Drew actually got pneumonia, and lost 20 pounds in the course of a week! By the end of the shoot we all looked like the infected in the building.

SCARS: Did making "The Poughkeepsie Tapes" right beforehand teach you any tips in making a movie with so much documentary-style footage?

DD: It taught us so much in every aspect of this filmmaking style. It's very difficult to make a scene feel captured and not staged, and you have to keep a close eye on the reality of it all.

"The Poughkeepsie Tapes" also taught us a lot of what we can and can't do

in editorial and sound. We brought our editor from "PT," Elliot Greenberg, on to edit "Quarantine" for that exact reason. We wanted to leverage his knowledge of this style and all the nice tricks he picked up on "PT."

JED: It took us a long time to get "The Poughkeepsie Tapes" right. We tried a lot of things that didn't work before we found a balance with it. All of those experiments were things we didn't even have to consider for this film. Things like not adding score to the "found footage." Because we walked into the film knowing that's how we wanted to finish it, we were able to de

QUARANTINE





sign score-like elements into the soundscape of the building.

SCARS: Where are you guys at with “The Poughkeepsie Tapes” anyway? It was reported a couple months ago that MGM wants to create a franchise around them. How much further do you want to go with the story?

DD: We’ve been told it may come out theatrically after “Quarantine.” Obviously we’re really hoping that it finally gets to theaters, but you just never know what’s going to happen. MGM has been in a state of transition for some time now, it’s hard to tell how things are ultimately going to shake out over there.

There was talk of a sequel when the original theatrical plan was in place for last February. We have a part 2 and 3 pretty mapped out. It all depends now, MGM would have to release the film and

do very well with it for those conversations to continue. We have some incredibly insane stuff in the sequel. On one hand it would be a shame if we never got to tell the rest of the story, but on the other hand it’s pretty great doing new and bigger films.

SCARS: What made you want to do a serial killer movie? Are either of you true-crime buffs?

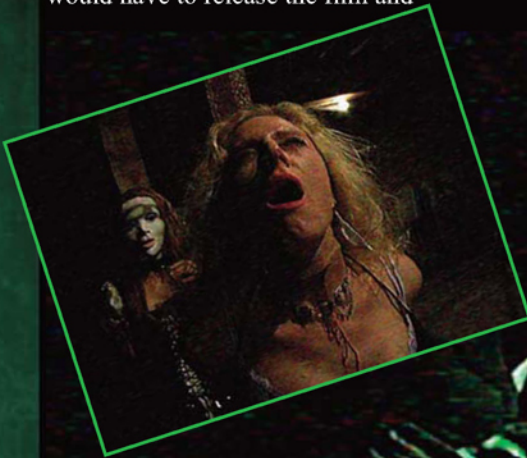
DD: We’re both huge true crime buffs. And we’re both fascinated by serial killers, as it seems most people are. We like horror stories that are also completely rooted in reality. In real life, what’s scarier than serial killers?

SCARS: To end, John, you’ve had that sort of classical rise—NYU film school, to LA, to directing a feature straight out of college. What advice would you and Drew give aspiring horror filmmakers?

JED: Just keep working at it, and don’t get good at anything else! The people who seem to stick with it seem to be the people without any other marketable skills.

Once, I was terribly nervous before a premiere, and my wife Stacy gave me wonderful piece of advice. She said, “Whether

the screening goes well or not doesn’t really matter, because tomorrow you’re going to get up, and you’re going to keep making movies.” And she’s right! That idea brings me a lot of comfort. Making movies has to be about a love for the work. If you love the work, you’ll do just fine.



The Good Sisters

by Patrick Storck

I was the key grip on THE GOOD SISTERS. You might wonder why you're hearing from me. More likely you're wondering what a key grip is, especially on an independent production. The position is well defined on studio gigs, but when you don't have millions to hire a separate person to cover each and every task - that means everyone works a little harder and a little closer.

Everybody likes to hear from the artists. The writers, the directors, the musicians, the actors, all of these people can provide fascinating insight into the process of creating the works we love. Where do the ideas come from? What did this mean to you? How did the artistic collaboration play out? These are all good questions that make the creators personalities much more evident in their work.





On the other side of it we have the roadies, the grips, the tech crew. The people who work to make the details of someone's creative vision happen as easily as they can so the creator can think about the project as a whole. Nobody ever thinks to sit down with the guy running the sound board for a Metallica show and get their thoughts. If they did the response would probably be, "Dude, it's buttons, sliders, and knobs. They're the ones playing Enter Sandman."

What follows are the buttons, sliders and knobs. All of us on set were big fans of knobs. Oh yeah.

While JimmyO was steering the ship, Shawn navigating the camera, April and Debbie were rocking it out on-screen, and David was making sure we had the vessels we needed, we had more than a few folks hoisting cables and blood pumps around each other on set.

On sound we had Derek and Jen. At first they were quiet; too quiet, if you would have asked me. Nobody did, and eventually they opened up more and more. I think sound people generally don't get as chatty as some of us because they're always making mental notes of background noise, checking levels by instinct. I swear Derek could tell what you had for breakfast by the way your stomach rumbled and when. Jen could hear that cables were near each other. Not twisted, pinched, or what-not. Just sort of on the same side of the room. I was a little scared.

Tall Katie was on the production log. She kept all of the notes, time codes, receipts, call sheets, phone numbers, and other de-

tails some of us are best not left to handle. We all had our expertise on the set, some officially and some random, but she was the one who knew what. Sometimes people are described as the glue that holds things together. She was the glue that kept all of the paperwork bound.

Joey and Rio were our effects folks. They had all sorts of blood for us, thin and thick, soapy and easy to remove, minty fresh mouth blood, blood for almost every occasion. They had appliances for some juicy effects, weird contact lenses, several make-up kits and some inhuman energy.

One cup of coffee seemed to have the same effect on Rio as that infamous lightning bolt that turned Barry Allen into The Flash. There was a low hum and suddenly she was going task to task while the rest of us were still trying to exit our morning fog.

Joey was much more low key, but since he was working a full time job, doing the

shoot, and sleeping between one and three hours some nights, the fact that he was able to keep up on all of the equipment, effects, details, and find time to develop some camera rigs is just incomprehensible to me. With that little sleep I generally turn into the Cigar Store Indian from "Creepshow" – stiff, slow moving, and murderous.

We had a bunch of other helping hands throughout the shoot, people like Kirby, Lilli and folks from the Chainsaw Sally message board, who all put in what time they could. We didn't have a large crew by your studio picture standards, but we had a passionate and motivated crew. While we all had our individual responsibilities, we all took turns being a fill in or a helping hand for each other.

The credits will reflect what somebody was chiefly responsible, but every single one of us did more than our share. I don't mean that too much was asked of us, but rather that we brought to the table every day whatever we could give, whenever we could, gladly.

We built a small family on the set. Some of us have already worked together again, some we're arranging to work with again. We know we can count on each other. I just wanted to establish who the "we" was whenever I mention "we" from here on out. For everyone that helped out, I just want to thank you all. Okay, done with the cuddling. I need a cigarette.

A large portion of the shoot was on location. For a lot of folks that means exteriors, and this is something we'll get to eventually. Location, though, means a set



that isn't built in a studio. The house you will see in the film is largely where we shot. The exteriors and interiors match beautifully because of this, funny how that works out. This room needs to have windows here, here, and here. What will work? Hmmm, I think I know the place. Step outside. How does that line up? Perfect!

Seriously, it was the perfect house. The layout, the structure, the inter-scene blocking, it all came together great for what we needed. We had good storage space for equipment, different color tones to reflect the different characters, easy access to all sorts of furniture to dress the set, and good natural light getting in as needed.

Controlling light over the course of a shoot is tricky business. A good sunny day can blow out a scene even if you drop your shutter speed to "blurry streak." An overcast day can drain the color from the richest blood splatter. We had some tree coverage keeping the sunlight from varying too wildly, so daytime shoots weren't as much of an issue.

The night shoots, by which I mean making it midnight at 2 p.m., were a little trickier. Blacking out the windows is a classic trick in which you take garbage bags, black cloth, paint, or tar and block the light coming in. Pretty simple. We didn't want to ruin the windows, and cloth generally has too loose a weave unless you start getting into the pricier stuff. The light just comes through in pin hole patterns that give warm patches to the "night sky." Garbage bags are cheap and effective.

You want the bags outside the windows if



possible so you don't have to hide the duct tape pins, or extended edges. This is fairly simple on the first floor of a house. Once you need a ladder it gets trickier. When you get up to rooms where ladders don't reach you ask the director if it really needs to be night time in that scene. Then you ask when sun down is. Then you walk away, muttering mild profanity and trying to think of something besides the paint idea again.

Here's what we came up with. It may sound a little stupid and uninteresting, but if any of you are ever shooting something that takes place at night, as I'm sure many of you will, perhaps you'll remember this and put it to good use.

Remove the top screen from the window. Set it on the floor, putting the inside face pointing down. Measure out a length of garbage bag (or bags) long enough to cover the whole window plus another two feet. Tape the one end of the garbage bag to the top of the screen. Make sure it's

taped on good and thorough. If you can, try to leave a few extra inches of black loose on each side.

Find something with decent weight, but not heavy per se, that is a few feet long. You can experiment with different things depending on wind, height, etc. We used some empty soda twelve-pack boxes stuffed with random debris. Flatten out the bottom end of the garbage bag, set the weight on it about an inch from the end, fold the end up, and duct tape the bag to the weight. On the other side of the weight place another strip of duct tape along the seam. Roll the weight up the bag a little and tape the seam again. This acts as a double or triple fail safe and seemed to prevent the bags from buckling or rippling too bad.

Pick up the screen with somebody else picking up the weight. Take it over to the open window. Drop the weight out the hole. Put the screen in. If it's not windy at all and there is no window sill this might do the trick. If not, raise or remove the bottom screen and tape down the sides with those extra inches. Since it's on the other side of the screen it doesn't have to be nearly exact.

For some windows we had to switch out from day to night fairly often, we took some extra time to tape the bags carefully to the top screen, leaving enough room for them to still fit in their tracks. If we had to switch time of day it only took a few moments to pull the screens and swap out our gels. It was almost always faster than any costume changes that needed to happen.





More important than natural light at the main location, for my purposes anyway, were the outlets. Every room had multiple outlets. Every one I went to had three prong ability! Bathrooms, hallways, even the front and side porch were three prong ready. It was fantastic. When we had to run cable (and we always had to run cable) we just needed to decide if it was worth re-running an entire set up, or just patching in to something nearby. Sure we had extension cords run though the house in every possible way, but we had so many outlets to choose from we just couldn't help plugging in anything that could be plugged.

All of those outlets can be home to lights, laptops, coffee makers, sound equipment, more lights, lamps, props, I said coffee, right? Having that extra outlet or three is, to the techie, like telling Mom you got her an extra kitchen on Thanksgiving morning. Yeah, there's still work to be done, but at least now you have more places to get it all going at once. You might even find new things to plug in just because you can.

I didn't mention the camera in the list above, so I will take a moment to justify my opinion on batteries in cameras...one less cable. That's it. One less thing to trip on, get tangled with A/V stuff, get knocked out by an exiting actor before the whole scene is complete. Just losing power would be bad enough, but if the camera gets tugged hard enough and takes a nasty spill you might be shutting down



production for a good long while. It won't happen with good planning, but why waste time planning around a completely avoidable scenario? Open and out of the way outlets are great when you have them, but keep both options on the table at all times.

So the house had good outlets. We were happy with the power situation. We also liked the general structure of the house. The equipment was easily placed, in spacious hallways or easily reached storage areas. The ceilings were generally high enough to keep the microphones hidden, as well as their shadows. The rooms looked similar enough to clearly be of the same house, but different enough to really reflect the different apartments inside. So it sounds perfect, right? Yeah, sounds...

Houses are built in neighborhoods. It's a sad and simple fact. If you have a house you have a very large chance of having another house very close to you. Houses without houses close to them are typically referred to as either cabins or mansions. We were neither shooting at a cabin nor a mansion, as it didn't fit the project at all. Also, cabins lack outlets and mansions have a nasty echo.

We're shooting at a nice house in a nice neighborhood, during the nice and pleasant spring time. At one point we had planned on shooting in the winter. Things happened and we didn't, and I personally think a lot of the exterior shots benefit from the warmer color scheme we got.



Still, there are no lawn mowers in the winter.

For all of us who are fans of horror, we have all thought about ways to see the horny teenager get offed. We've all pondered what around a police station could take out the sheriff just as he's about to call in for reinforcements. We've all thought about each item in the shed that can end the nosy neighbor sneaking up to see what all the noise is.

Consider the lawn mower. It's got a series of sharpened blades hooked to a motor. Why hasn't this become a staple of the genre? The amount of damage it could do, especially with the vent on the side to spray out horny teen chum, is perfect. Just watch "Dead Alive" (as we in the States know it) for some great lawn mower usage.

Well, besides Peter Jackson setting the bar pretty high, what with the puree treatment on a room full of zombies and all, there's the noise they make. Zombies get drawn to noise, but horny teens don't. Jason, were he wielding a big rumbling engine, would not be able to sneak up very well on anyone. The machete, the knife, the hammer, the ice pick, all nice and quiet. A frozen turkey, fishing line, paper clips, there are just so many things that are quieter than a lawn mower.

I think over the years film makers have learned to quietly hate these machines.

You're in the middle of a key piece of dialogue, then two blocks away you hear the engine fire up. It's nice and loud because it's a diesel and gas mix to fuel it, and that sputter really picks up nice on your sound equipment. Oops, they hit a branch. Oh, and now a rock. I'm sure the dialogue will play great with that scrape in the middle. I wouldn't be surprised if every "lawn" in Los Angeles was actually just really realistic AstroTurf.

It doesn't take too long to mow the average suburban lawn, so we were allowed to be a bit naïve at first. When we heard the machine sputter down we would go back inside, power up, check the time code, and get just about ready to roll. That's when somebody in the neighborhood picked up on how it sounded like a nice day to mow the lawn. Someone else is doing it. Maybe I will too.

I know this is more about non-killing power tools than most of you want to see, but this is the shoot from my perspective. If you don't think they were horrible, you don't wake up from the same rumbling nightmares, black and oily smoke belching from a sputtering engine with the throttle too low, deck lowered over an uneven gravel driveway, when I'm trying to pull audio on the final words of Kurt Vonnegut. Damn, I bet they were pretty good...

You know what else you find in suburbia? Snakes. Usually they are little tiny snakes that you can trap in a bucket and let out near a storm drain. When I say you, I mean you, as in not me.

I grew up on Indiana Jones movies. Maybe it's because I wanted to emulate the globe traveling archeologist, but it's probably because they tried to make the snakes extra scary to the kids watching. Either way, I am not good around snakes. Neither were a few others on the shoot, so when the idea came up to use a snake for one of the scenes I was not the only one nervous.

I won't say who was pro-snake and who was against, because that's not important. The snake's owners, obviously, were all for it. The more they described the creature, and how there should be no problem as long we followed an ever growing list, the more I was quietly against it. I believe some of the caveats were "Don't look at it funny," "Keep it away from pets, small children, and the elderly," and "Wipe it down with holy water every ten minutes." I wasn't really paying attention. There was possibly going to be a giant snake on the set.

There was never a big debate on the subject. I don't want to paint the picture of fiercely drawn battle lines. We were following a schedule, we were on schedule, and we had access to a snake that could really enhance some insert shots. We just kept it on the table as an option if we wound up enough ahead to allow the shots. Since it involved transport, care and control of a large animal, we didn't want to just wing it one day. I wasn't going to drag my feet to make sure we didn't have time, because there were other things we also thought about trying with any extra time. Still, I thought

about excuses I might make if it came down to it. I'm Irish, and the snake may have a grudge, plus I keep mice in my pockets, I'm allergic to reptiles and I'm a bit of a coward -- all perfectly valuable and legitimate concerns.

As it turns out, we didn't shoot the snake. The safety of the animal around the lights, outlets, cables and an overweight bald guy who jumps onto furniture and shouts "EEK!" might not be a good environment for somebody's pet. Somebody's big, scary pet.

We're working now on "The Chainsaw Sally Show," and guess who I got to meet on the first day of shooting? Yep. Luckily his cage is right next to the bathroom. Snakey McSlither and I get along fine for now, but I swear I heard him hiss something about my ancestry when nobody else was in the room.

Speaking of chainsaws, I need to go back for a moment and clarify something. I am not against all power tools, far from it. While I complain about the lawn mower, that's something that gets the hive mind of suburbia going. The chainsaw, luckily, remains our friend. It's not like one day everyone decides to take a few limbs off the tree out front. It's for special occasions!

The chainsaw has a deceptively low rumble when it is idling, too, so you can sound further away than you really are. The chainsaw is more accurate, and really digs in deep, pulling itself in deeper as it goes if you get the right angle.



The chainsaw has handles that make it easier to swing around, one handed or two, and give you a much better reach. Imagine Leatherface trying to whip a Toro around on the highway, really putting his back into it, spinning it like Swayze spun Jennifer Grey in, uh... never mind. I know April would not be thrilled about dragging a John Deere through the woods after some dim-witted yogurt brain. The lawn mower is just not viable as anything above a toe danger or an audio annoyance.

Chainsaws have a much less inconvenient fail safe than the spring-loaded grip release of a lawn mower. Finally, chainsaws start easier. Nobody will be waiting for the psycho to adjust the choke, check the throttle, make sure nothing is snagging the blades, throttle, choke, kick, swear, go grab the crossbow and see about getting some killing in finally.

Since it was a scary movie we were making, I should discuss some of the bloodier elements. I don't want to give away any spoilers, obviously, so I'll just talk about an effect without the who or the why. In one scene a character has their chest cracked open and an organ removed. By organ I mean a part of the human anatomy, not some portable piano. If anyone was hoping to see a subplot about the Good Sisters curing Moog's Disease, you have bigger problems than not getting to see that scene.

I wasn't involved in the construction of the appliance, so I can't speak on that. I can say that when a person is destroying another person in the bath tub of a small bathroom, blood spraying, in a wide shot, I can see the benefits of shooting in a studio. We shot in an actual small bathroom, which while more authentic was a bit of a challenge.

First we had to block out the shot we wanted. Where were the characters, and what was the movement? From how far

back did we want the master shot? Inserts for effect could be played with, but to get the real idea across you needed a good master shot. We pulled back as far as we could to keep the camera away from the initial blood spray, keep everyone in frame, but not disappear into another room down the hall.

After we got the shot lined up we moved the camera and prepared the room. Lights were set up, cords were hidden, and the basics of the blood effect were run. Anything that was under a copyright we didn't control was obscured or removed. Besides not wanting to anger the folks at Disney, we didn't think the Goods were "Little

going for. We tried caps, string, all sorts of things that would split the flow. They all failed. Ultimately we found the easiest option, pinching the hose a little (that's what she said) gave us a nice juicy, spattery burst (she said that too).

We measured how far it shot, got a good angle, got the character in place, and then hid the line with some towels. Our character held the hole to his side, now making him unofficially part of the effects team, and we were good to go. The camera was set up and protected, the other actors in place.



While effects shots take more time to prepare, more attention to detail, more focus in perfecting whatever illusion you're creating, the hardest part of any well done effects shot is the giggle. When our one character was damaging our other, the blood was squirting around the room, and all of it was paying off nicely, it was almost painful holding it in. Once cut was yelled it didn't burst out as you'd expect. It

Mermaid" fans. Ursula, maybe, but who isn't? Well, Ariel, but that's the start of a circular argument.

While the victim was being set up, we tested the blood's arc. We had a blood pump hooked up to a hose, the hose run along the wall into the tub. It had to be long enough to keep the operator out of the shot, which meant we had to tweak the blood. If it was too thin it would spray too much and not read as blood. Too thick and it wouldn't move through the line right. It would just fight the pressure coming in and dribble out on the other side.

With the right consistency set, we now had to work on the angle and spray. The mouth of the hose made it look like a stream of blood was coming out of a small hidden hose. While true, it wasn't what we were

was more like we were giggling the whole time and somebody slowly turned up the volume. The giggles evolved into "Nice..." and finally, "You should have seen it from here."

One blood effect that didn't get laughs wasn't actually an effect at all. It was actually a bit of a scare. Not like the set of "Twilight Zone," keeping things in perspective, but nobody wants to see anyone get hurt on set.

When one of your leads, who also happens to be your producer, and also has schedules to keep and can't afford injury, when that person falls several feet into a hard wood floor wrong? You panic.

Now to be clear, it is in the script that David had to climb up on a large chair to

inspect a noise from above. It's also written that he falls. That's why we positioned some pillows out of the view of the camera. Even if we'd cast Jackie Chan for the role we'd have done that. It's simple safety.

When we saw him fall there was a split second where I thought, "That's really convincing. That look of panic is..." THUD! Immediately every worst case scenario played out in all of our minds. Sprained ankle, broken leg, rib cage shattered or he landed on his keys. We rushed over.

Yeah, not bad at all. He had a scrape on his leg, but he only expressed concern about the continuity if he was bleeding in the next take. He did a few more takes; we placed a few more pillows. As it turns out, despite all of our black tee shirts and tattoos, some of us crew folk are panicky pansies.

I'm a smoker. It's a filthy habit, and I discourage anybody from picking it up. It causes many health problems, makes your clothes stink, and yellows your teeth. Cigarette companies put puppies and cocaine into their products and will someday turn us into zombie hordes.

That said, I love it. It's a great way to kill a few minutes while you're waiting on a costume change, for lights to get moved, or just go outside and talk. A small set gets crowded easily, so it's a good way to get a few bodies out of a room. If you're shooting in warm weather, the less people you can have in a room the better, at least until they invent a silent air conditioner.

While April and Debbie would get changed, run lines, or do those other mysterious things women do when they go to the bathroom together, we crew members would go outside and take a few puffs. I personally hoped each time to cough up some of the cat hair I was terribly allergic to. Creative people own cats, and I am cursed.

We would go outside and prepare for the next batch of shots we'd get the layout of the scene, the color palette and the angles, and then start planning. What cables need to go where? What time of day was it supposed to be? Got a light? Thanks. Do we want to work in movement or any neat ef-

fects? Is there anything complicated coming up we should plan for? How are we doing on coffee, extension cords and duct tape?

The cigarette break can be an invaluable resource to the film maker. Don't start smoking, but if you do happen to, you're welcome.

Speaking of breathing difficulties, I should mention the greenhouse. The greenhouse is generally kept at a regulated temperature optimal for the plant life inside year round. When you are shooting on a particularly warm day and you have to turn off all of the fans in a greenhouse to get clean audio it can become uncomfortable.

I've already mentioned that I'm a smoker, a little overweight, and Irish. None of this helps me in any way deal with extreme heat. My only escape was when I ran out of moisture. I would stop sweating and my body would lose sense of my environment. I think it's scientifically like trying to heat up an empty tea kettle. I'm not good at science.

Every so often I would remember that the body needs water to survive and I was completely out. I would chug a bottle, immediately sweat it out, and then be asked to handle cables and powerful electronics. I was so nervous I would start to sweat until I remembered I couldn't, so I'd go grab a bottle of water. The dehydration also made me very confused.

Strangely enough my car stalled as we had first arrived at the location that morning. I can't remember exactly what the issue was, but I'm pretty sure the radiator was low. Perhaps my car was trying to warn me.

It was a little awkward shooting the sex magic scene. I won't really describe the contents of the scene, since I think the title tells you all you need to know. Here we are, a nice and tight-knit group that has worked closely on so much already. Now actresses are literally baring themselves, and we have to clinically aim lights and cameras at them.

I can only imagine the discomfort of disrobing in front of people you call friends and simulating things you would never ac-

tually do in front of them. Then you have to make it convincing. Then you have to do it again...and again.

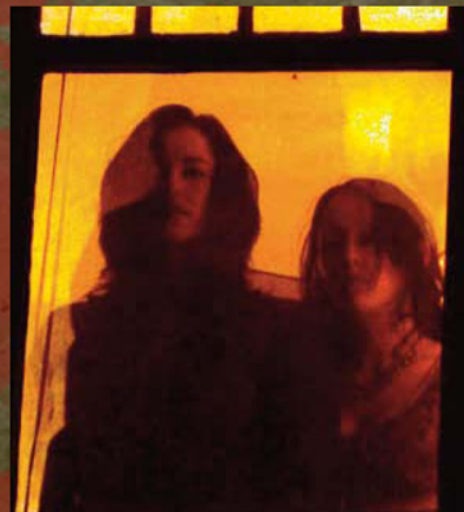
The sequence has a unique feel to it that required a lot of cut away shots, inserts, close up, and we had to just detach ourselves as we moved the camera, did our lighting tricks, and recorded each take. We didn't want to make the girls shyness take over.

What helped was keeping a very professional demeanor. We only used technical terms for what we wanted in a shot, making sure to avoid crass slang. Anyone with moral objections to the content of the scene was allowed to leave for the day. We who remained would just grit our teeth and get through it.

Once we finished shooting the scene we had a short prayer session, then discussed our feelings about what happened, acknowledging that it was to never be spoken of again. If only fiction did not require the nudity of beautiful women...

Hopefully this gave a little insight into how an independent production goes down from the perspective of one of us grunts. Even more so, I hope that this was interesting. We don't ask for the glory, the press or the glamour. We just ask for coffee and snacks. Whatever groupies or extras might be hanging around waiting for an autograph from somebody more important -- we know that person and we can introduce you.

"Good Sisters" is in post-production now. When you see it make sure to read through the credits. They're friends of mine.





EAT OR BE EATEN

INTERVIEWS BY RAYMOND DOWALIBY AND MATT MOLLOY

SCARS caught up with director Gary King and actress Lydia Chandler about their latest trip into the swamps. Fearmakers Studios presents a new film filled with cannibals, blood and babes: **DISMAL**.

DIRECTOR GARY KING

SCARS: In 2004 we were introduced to Favors, a very well thought out and executed short film. Tell us a little bit about yourself and how film became a driving force in your life.

Gary King: I've always loved film growing up as a kid. My parents brought me up on all types. I knew at an early age that I not only enjoyed them as a viewer, but also was very intrigued in the process of making them. In fact, I used to play "film-making" with my friends in grade school. Yeah, we were the weird kids. I believe my passion for movies extended naturally into wanting to make them for a living. There's nothing like being on a set living out your childhood dreams.

SCARS: What were some of the biggest challenges working on *Dismal*?

GK: The hardest part was battling the natural elements while shooting in the South during the peak of the summer season. We were really shooting in the swamps and the elements in the beautiful town of Blakely, Georgia. The heat and bugs were unbearable at times, but everyone pulled through. It really made me appreciate air-conditioning and showers. The producers and crew worked so hard with the limited resources we had, so I couldn't have asked for anything more.

SCARS: Would you consider Horror an easier genre to capture the essence of as opposed to comedy?

GK: I think both genres are extremely tough to do mainly because there's huge expectations from a built-in audience for these types of films. The great thing about



horror fans is that they're willing to embrace new films, ready to show their love for it. Comedy fans may not be as forgiving because if the film isn't funny, then it isn't funny.

For horror, if you can throw in some nice kills and other elements that bring people to the seats, they're going to have a good time. It's my goal, however, to not only include these elements, but to provide something new. Something people weren't expecting. If you can catch people off guard and defy expectations, then you're really onto something good. I think DISMAL provides some stellar performances that one does not expect from the low-budget world. The cinematography also lends to viewers thinking they're watching a bigger budget film, when in fact the film was shot for very little.

SCARS: What were the most memorable set experiences on Dismal? The one or two things that may left SCARS on everyone.

GK: Filming my first nude love scene with actors Meagan Reedy and Jade Arnold. That was an experience. Actually, it was everyone's first nude scene, so we were all virgins on the set. The ice was broken when Meagan mistakenly dropped her panties while in-between takes and caught everyone off guard. Our DP (Shawn Lewallen) freaked out and told her to put them back on. Hilarious!

The second was when Bill Oberst Jr. (who plays "Dale") stepped foot on set for the first time. He and I made an arrangement where he was housed away from the cast and crew, so that he would remain an enigma. So after we shot the first scene on his first day, everyone was freaked out. Really freaked out. People were all ask-

ing, "who the fu@k is that guy?" I just smiled.

SCARS: Where do you see Horror in your Directional future?

GK: I see myself in a nice working relationship with Fearmakers Studios. The producers have some really interesting projects up their sleeve that they're developing which I would love to direct. If things go well, producer/writer Bo Buckley and I have some ideas for the Dismal sequel, which involve a school bus full of a high school gymnastics team. All female of course.

Other than that, I am developing some other horror/suspense films as well. Both John Carpenter and Brian De Palma are idols of mine, and I'd like to tackle a project to similar to some of their early work. I also am a geek for Italian giallos, so something in that genre would be heaven for me to direct.

SCARS: SCARS likes to focus on the indie Film and Film Maker. What advice can you offer the Evil Dead Fan who wants to make the transition from theatre seat to behind the camera?

I'd say go and find some like-minded people and do it. Surround yourself with determined folk who have the same mindset as you. They are out there. Don't bite off more than you can chew, but definitely challenge yourself and set little goals. Some of our best filmmakers never went to film school so don't let that stop you. It's all about learning from your mistakes, so don't be afraid to make some. In the end, having a finished film to show an audience will be one of the most rewarding experiences you'll ever have. So again, don't just talk about it. Do it.

LYDIA CHANDLER

SCARS: Tell us about Dana, the character you play in Dismal.

Lydia Chandler: Dana is a troubled girl. She has been in a long term, abusive relationship with her boyfriend, Brady. He tells her what she can and cannot do and who she can or cannot hang out with. Dana more or less followed Brady to college and she didn't have the confidence to make a lot of friends. She is known by the people in her class as quiet and shy. She mostly keeps to herself and tries not to draw attention to herself. Dana knows that if she puts on makeup and dresses nicely then Brady will be happy, and when he's happy they don't fight. She has a lot of built up emotions that the audience gets to see her release. Dana was a lot of fun to play because I can be really shy sometimes and I was given the opportunity to develop a shy character into an avenger.

SCARS: Dismal is the only film listed on your IMDB page. Was this your first feature film?

LC: This was my first feature. I have done student films for the University of North Carolina at Wilmington and films for local film festivals but nothing on the same level as Dismal. I also did a series of Comcast commercials when I was in high school.

SCARS: How was the filming process for you? Was the switch from victim to heroine a difficult one?

LC: Filming was amazing. I absolutely loved every single second of it. There were days when we were dirty and tired and we had been up since 4 am but we didn't care because we loved what we

were doing. As far as preparing for my scenes goes, some days were harder than others. I had to really put myself into the mindset of a scared 19 year old girl whose friends were all dead. It was definitely tough because I am a naturally happy person but once I was on set and in makeup I truly felt like Dana.

The switch from victim to heroine was steady and something that was constantly being developed. The audience gets to watch Dana grow and overcome the negativity that Brady brought into her life. The director Gary King and Producer Bo Buckley made sure that I knew the path that needed to be taken with her and that was believable. We did shoot a couple of the scenes out of order but we made sure to shoot Dana's big scene last. That was I was able to understand everything that she has gone through and allowed the pint up aggression from her relationship with Brady to emerge and explode.

SCARS: Are you a fan of the horror genre, and if so, what are some of your favorite movies?

LC: I am the type of fan who gets really excited when a horror movie goes to theaters and then gets really chicken when the movie starts. For instance I have seen the movie the 6th Sense a total of 7 times and I have NEVER seen the whole movie. I always covered my eyes during the same parts. The same thing goes for The Ring. I just cannot seem to watch the movie all the way through. I wouldn't say that Pet Cemetery is one of my favorites but I saw it when I was 10 or so and it is one of the horror films that still gets to me every now and then. Some of my favorite movies though are It, the original Amityville Horror, Killer Klowns From Outer Space and (I don't know if it would be considered a horror film) but the movie Fear with Reese Witherspoon and Mark Wahlberg. I like both of them as actors and they did an amazing job with that film.

SCARS: Do you have any other projects coming up?

LC: As of right now I am not working on anything. I am still in school and take every opportunity that I can to learn more about the craft and how I can be a better actor. I'm always looking for work.

Visit www.fearmakersdismal.com.



BOOK VS MOVIES: THE MIDNIGHT MEAT TRAIN

by J.C. Walsh

From the legendary Books Of Blood, Clive Barker's *The Midnight Meat Train* is a dark and twisted ride that glimpse not only into the horrors that lives deep within the catacombs inside of us, but of the unimaginable existence of what could live underneath the places we call home.

The story focuses around two characters.

An accountant named Leon Kaufman and Mahogany, the Subway butcher. For years Kaufman has been yearning to live in his dream city New York. He finally gets his wish, but after living there for a few months began to loathe the things it was built upon, death and violence. The headlines of the newspapers don't help. Disgusted, he reads about the "Subway Slayings," where the victims are brutally murdered, stripped of their clothes and hung from meat hooks, the grisly findings discovered inside of a train.

The story switches over to Mahogany's point of view. A man that feels his job is sacred, serving "The Father's" is a privilege compared to the mundane routines that humanity follows day by day. But age is catching up with him, he's constantly exhausted and he continues to make mistakes, ones that cost him dearly, exposure constantly a threat as his kills are discovered and all over the news.

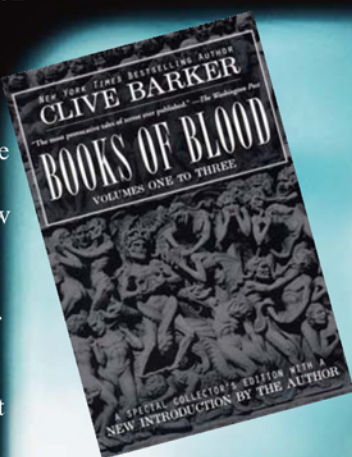
The way that Clive Baker

switches back and forth between the characters give a unique sense of what they are about, so that when their worlds collide it becomes a battle of primal instinct and survival. The dark side of Kaufman is revealed and welcomes a knife fight against a man like Mahogany for all the murderous deceptions he stands for, while Mahogany wants to kill Kaufman because he

was not worthy of the sacrament that The Butcher's work was. The fight ends in intense blood shed. What follows is Clive Barker's ability to impose in such frightening imagery of the things that lurk in the darkness, eternally starving for human flesh.

The Film adaptation of Barker's horrifying story is directed by Ryuhei Kitamura, and produced by Clive Barker. Staying true to the short story's theme, The Film also adds depth and creates a new approach to the classic work of fiction. The movie version of Leon Kaufman (Bradly Cooper) is a photographer, and much like the character in the short story has a love for the city and wants to capture it's divine moments through his work. But when a girl Kaufman has seen disappears and her picture is in the paper, he begins to obsess with the man he believes not only killed her, is also responsible for the subway slayings that have been happening for years and could be the infamous Butcher.

Instead of keeping the change in Kaufman subtle like in the story, the movie shows how he endures the further his obsessing grows, illusions of slaughter and death haunt him and the police are no help for fear that there is a dark conspiracy in the grand scheme of all





of it. What really adds to the dread and worry for the character is that his girlfriend and friend are worried and get involved by investigating The Butcher so they can uncover whatever trouble Kaufman in order to help him.

When there are scenes of the Butcher, played by the bad ass Vinnie Jones, The Film portrays his inhuman strength as he rips into his victims with a meat hook, pounds their flesh into pulp with a metallic meat hammer, or severs limbs with a cleaver. There was some enhancement to the gory effects by using CGI, giving some kills a strange surreal look but by all means keeping them brutal. But just like

the story we see how vulnerable the Butcher has become of old age, and by mysterious tumor growths on his chest that cause him to cough up blood.

In the end, Kaufman fights to not only overcome his fear, but to save his sanity, and those of the people he loves. The final fight scene between Kaufman and the Butcher was relentless, nasty, and one of the best caught on film. Anyone who hasn't read the short story will find the revelations of "The Fathers" a curve ball in the movie, turning a Slasher flick into something much more that'll leave audiences either stumped or begging for more. Unfortunately, there wasn't much about "The

Fathers" in the movie like the haunting visionary in the story. Rumor has it, because of Film Company Lions Gates mishandling of the theatrical release of the film it might have prolonged any hope of future sequels as intended to go further into the history of the flesh- devouring inhabitants.

Whether you read the short story, see the movie or both, Clive Barker gives us a taste of what true horror is all about. It was full of originality, suspense, and ruthless gore that'll make hardcore fans shudder with delight or stand up and applause.





RETURN TO THE GRIND WITH FREAK SHOW ENTERTAINMENT

Interview by Matt Molloy

SCARS got the chance to chat with Joseph Guzman Producer, Writer and Director of "Run! Bitch Run!" the new film, that is "balls deep in violence, blood, forbidden love and... **SEX, SEX, SEX!**"

SCARS: Tell us a little about Freak Show Entertainment and what sets you apart from other production companies?

Joseph Guzman: Freak Show Entertainment was created out of necessity. We were unsatisfied working on other people's films and at the end of the day just receiving a paycheck. Even though you

Catherine and Rebecca, two Catholic School girls going door-to-door selling religious paraphernalia in order to pay for their education. Things go horribly wrong when they knock on the wrong door in the wrong neighborhood. After she is brutally raped and left for dead, Catherine awakes with one thing on her mind: REVENGE. "Run! Bitch Run!" is a throwback to the

have a following. We made this movie as a tribute to those films that were made in the 70's and 80's such as "I Spit On Your Grave" and "They Call Her One Eye." We enjoyed watching those movies and we sure enjoyed making this one.

SCARS: With this being Freak Show Entertainment's first full-length feature film,



worked on a project, it's still never going to be yours. It is always going to be somebody else's dream. We decided that we don't want to be in the business of making other people's dreams come true and the only way to do that is to start your own company and make the movies you want to make and see.

SCARS: Describe "Run! Bitch Run!" for us.

JG: "Run! Bitch Run!" tells the story of

classic 1970's Rape and Revenge films like "Last House On the Left" and "Ms. 45." The film takes place in the late 1970's, where the lack of modern technology made the world a more vulnerable place.

SCARS: Why did you decide to choose such a controversial subject matter?

JG : Well this entire genre is controversial... rape and revenge films will never become mainstream. However, they do

how did the film making process go?

JG : The entire filmmaking process went as smooth as it could with a limited budget and crew. For the first half of the film, we had to get our power from two extension cords running from the set to a neighbor's house. While shooting in the forest, we were almost attacked by a bear, the neighbors would constantly play Mariachi music till late into the night (which was an audio nightmare) and our dog ran away mid shoot. But we come from the school

of "what doesn't kill us only makes us stronger." We will take all the adversities from the first film, learn from them, and take that new found knowledge into future endeavors.

SCARS: Who are some of the cast members and how did they do with the more difficult scenes?

JG : The cast members are a rag tag group of actors and actresses, many of whom are veterans of the industry, either in TV or theatre. Some of the casts were comedians who are more apt to adapt to the more difficult scenes. Daeg Faerch was brought on as a cameo appearance for a tribute to Rob Zombie, who is a legend in this genre of filmmaking.

SCARS: On your website, www.freakshowentertainment.com, three other films are listed: "Chingaso the Clown," "Back Alley Butcher" and "Inflicted." Tell us about each one and their progress.

JG : "Chingaso the Clown" is a stand alone short film based on an underground comic book of the same name. On this film, we had a chance to work with some great talent. The DP of the film was Author Wong and the make-up effects were done by Academy Award Nominee for "Passion of the Christ," Christian Tinslee.

"Back Alley Butcher" was a teaser we shot for a feature length film we plan to shoot in the future. It was primarily made to test how our main villain would look and act on screen. "Inflicted" was made as part of the 48 Hour Film Project. This was the first time the contest was held in our area so we decided it would be fun to shoot something for it.

SCARS: Each of your projects have very

different styles and stories from each other. It is great to see such variety. Is it important to you that Freak Show Entertainment creates such a wide selection of films?

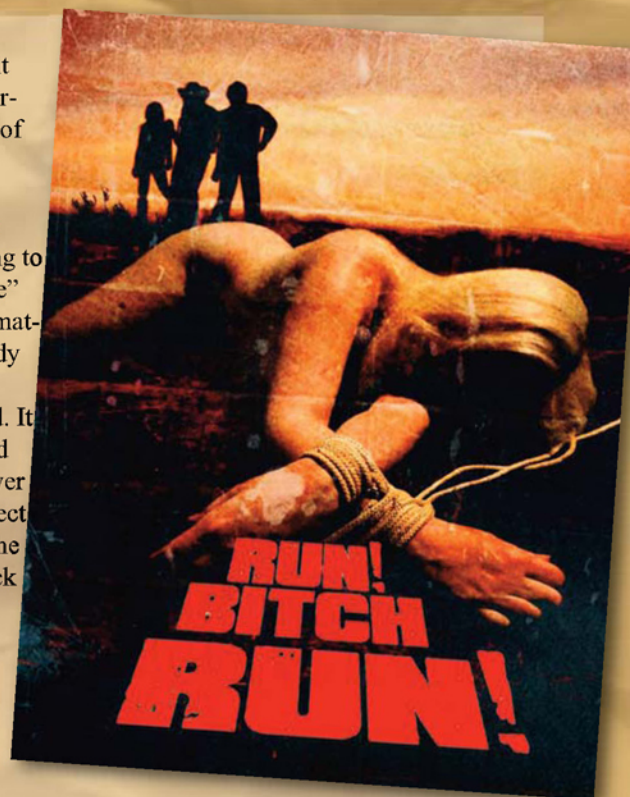
JG : Our main goal is Company Name Recognition. What Freak Show is trying to accomplish is to have a "signature style" expand through several genres. So no matter what the movie is about, if somebody picks up a DVD with the Freak Show logo on it they will not be disappointed. It is also important to not get pigeonholed into doing one type of film over and over again. Since we write, produce and direct the films ourselves it is imperative to the creative process that we do not get stuck in a rut of just churning out the same movie with different box covers.

SCARS: Does Freak Show Entertainment have any other projects in the works?

JG : The next film we are doing is "Nude Nuns With Big Guns." Nude Nuns is about Sister Sarah, a rehabilitated prostitute turned Nun who is tracked down, raped, and left for dead by her former pimp (Chavo) and his merciless motorcycle gang (El Diablos). Unable to control her lust for vengeance, Sara sets out to dispense Judgment Day on those who did her wrong.

Be sure to keep an eye out for Freak Show Entertainment. Big things will be coming from them!

www.freakshowentertainment.com



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